Depot Town Rag

Volume 14, Number 3 *"All the news in one block in one month."*

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

100% FREE Rag content

March 1991

- **Ice Cream Parlor sold**
- Nina Levin?
- Spring elections
- **Steaks & burgers, bad words, old forts, apartments,**

. . . and other strictly local stuff

EMU marketing scheme focuses on Depot Town

Eastern Michigan University's Small Business Institute, through an agreement with 1990 DTA president, Paul Fetters, conducted a study of the district which was completed on 13 December 1990. Working with EMU's Dr. R. Rodman Ludlow were Irene S. Brock, Michelle L. Reisinger, Rosina M. Teuma and Elaine D. Turner. That portion of the report dealing with the effect of the Association is condensed in this issue. Other condensations will follow in *The Rag* and the full report is available from 1991 DTA president, A. William French, c/o Aubree's Saloon.

The team verified 42 established businesses in Depot Town. Two businesses were rehabilitation services which were not included in the survey because they operate on a referral basis. An additional two businesses were not included in the survey because they are new and not yet open for business. Consequently, that left a total of 38 operating retail businesses, including the Farmers' Market.

Beginning with this are some of their findings regarding attitudes toward DTA membership on the block.

The Association thanks its EMU associates for a most professional and objective view of our operation.

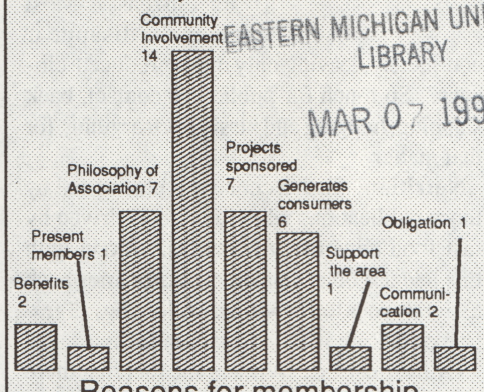
Study shows attitudes toward DTA membership

31 businesses responded to the survey, 2 refused the survey and 5 were unable to be reached.

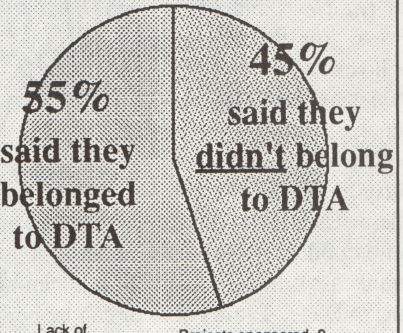
Of the businesses who responded, 17 said they belonged to the Depot Town Association, Inc., 14 said they did not.

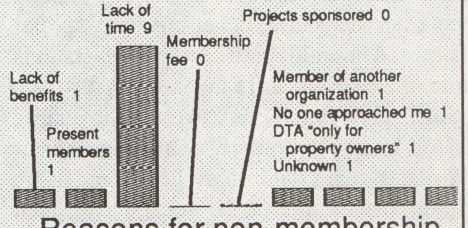
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

MAR 07 1991



Reasons for membership





Reasons for non-membership

DTA members belong to other membership organizations:

DTA members	17
Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce	9
Central Business Community (downtown merchants)	3
Other memberships	7

Only 3 DTA non-members belong to other membership organizations:

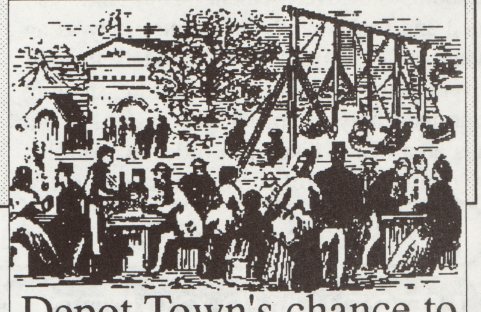
Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce	0
Central Business Community	0
Other	3

Note: The Merchants Committee was stated as the other organization in all three cases - and is an arm of the DTA.

DTA members:	**Non-members:**
Rent: 8 out of 17	Rent: 13 out of 14
Own: 9 out of 17	Own: 1 out of 14

Next month:

What benefits would non-members like to see? Would they join if they could get them?



Antique Engine Club sets season of iron expos

There'll be plenty of huffing and puffing for the members and machines of the Depot Town Antique Engine Club this coming season. After a winter of grinding, polishing, and painting in their workshops, the men and women who restore those historic engines of the Industrial Revolution are ready to load their pick-ups and vans and get those gas and steam contraptions putt-putting in the open air once again.

Club president, Ron Bracken, announces the 45-member group's line-up for the season, so far: **Model Engineer's Convention** at Domino's Farms April 6 & 7,**Wiard's Orchard** in May, **Belleville Show** June 6 & 9, and the **Early Engine Expo** at August's Heritage Festival. The Club meets every 4th Thursday in the Freighthouse Coffeeshop and this month's agenda will feature members' annual 'show and tell.' All interested parties are invited to join in an activity which proves that real historic preservation includes a lot more than just old buildings.

Depot Town's chance to prepare for our biggest Festival crowd, yet:

Planning for August's annual Ypsilanti Heritage Festival begins this month! Volunteers are invited to participate in the Thursday, March 7, open meeting at the Freighthouse at 5:15pm.

Depot People:

Censorship in the monthlies? A good word for a few bad words

What is *not* printed in neighborhood promotional material is often just as important as what *is* printed.

Everybody knows that big business holds great economic power over the daily newspapers in which they advertise. That's why Detroit never got anything more viable than the People Mover. General Motors was never too interested in public transportation, so *The News* and *Free Press* (or the *Times*! Who can remember the *Times*?) couldn't carry too many articles about subways, streetcars or dirigible depots. But there was often a whole section on the private automobile - with articles about seat covers, crankcase oil, road maps, chrome plating and gas mileage. Little could or can be be found about bus schedules, ticket transfers, special daily and monthly rates or exotic stations around the perimeter of the megalopolis.

Such subtle omissions can color the quality of life in any community -- and the Greater Ypsilanti area could enjoy great benefit by simply using more of the vocabulary which has been omitted from the slickers and tabloids in Our Town.

A few examples of *good* bad words:

Curmudgeondom: Most promotional blurbs dish out a column about how nicely civilized are their officers and representatives. These personalities are so watered down and sanitized that they seem to have stepped out of a toothpaste advertisement. They smile and nod and shake hands as automatically as an animated exhibit at Disney World. Seldom, if ever, do they feature some spitting, snarling curmudgeonly character who has staked out his area of the district in order to patrol it regularly and make hourly reports on progress.

Irascibility: Often applied to the same characterization as in the preceding paragraph, such a personality is never featured in the mall flyers or district hypes. Holding absolutely no opinion on anything, neighborhoods which lack irasciblity often melt into misdirection and nothingingness.

Intimacy: Being all things to all people necessitates a White Bread mentality, when what was really desired was Pumpernickle. Such watering-down of style usually signals the immediate loss of personality for the neighborhood as well as its citizens. Most 'denizens' disappear completely, leaving only mass-produced 'citizens.' So much for public eye contact, back slapping, hugging and kissing. Or arguing, for that matter.

Nutrition: Such a concept is blacklisted by those publications whose budget is driven by fast food advertising contracts. Along with this ban are other related exclusionaries such as references to chewing, swallowing, digestion or talking with your mouth full.

Odiferousness: Witness the fact that there are far more negative words for smells than positive ones; the so-called modern communities are absent of *any* reference to odor, for fear that they might result in some of the many which are on their list of 'bad words.' The result is soap cakes hidden in every nook and cranny smelling of after-dinner mints. But nobody talks about smells, much less writes or publishes about them. Modern members of the community have actually been brainwashed into believing that petroleum residue is a more acceptable odor than the natural leftovers of horses. Try to find a how-to article about putting an oil slick on your flower bed. This concept just won't sell at the mega-mall.

Quilt news:

AtticWindows are the theme of quilt challenge

The Greater Ann Arbor Quilt Guild is sponsoring a Quilters Challenge for the Michigan Quilt Network. The theme for this challenge is "Attic Windows." Entrants must be Michigan Quilters (residents) or a member of the Michigan Quilt Network. Only one entry per person, oper class. Entry fee of $2. Each entry must contain an attic window block in size or number to be determined by the quiltmaker. Contact Sandee Simmons, 29807 Autumn Lane, Warren, MI 48093. Deadline: July 1, 1991.

Depot Town apartments available this month

Looking for high ceilings, loft living, in rehabbed urban living spaces? Several of those great spaces up over the stores will become available within the next few months. Call the editor for the listing of unique living spaces in Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town: - 482-6371.

At the Farmers' Market this month:

March 2 - Used Book Sales

Open to all residents or sellers; nominal stall fee

March 9 - 1st Annual Home Business Bazaar

For services and good from home sellers.

March 16

Herb and Perennials Workshop

(conducted by Brookville Gardens. Limited registration available; fee required. Phone 455-8602)

Planting and care of these plants.

March 23

Annual Easter Craft Show

Bunnies, baskets, spring flowers and more.

At the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market -Wednesdays & Saturdays:

MESSINA'S CHEESE
At the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market
Wed or Sat 483-1480 or 459-1995 any time
Continuing low prices for AMISH CHICKENS
Bring in ad for 10c off per lb.

J U D Y ' S
1st CLASS FARE

- Gourmet Coffee Beans whole or freshly ground
- Fresh Cut Flowers
- Rocky Top Jams & Non Alcoholic Sparkling Wines
- Uncle Bum's Romesco Sauce

Saturdays at the Farmers' Market

Depot Town Sourdough Bakery
310 N. River St. 313-487-8110

Ring, ring!

"Knock, knock" goes high-tech

"Hello? Nina? Is that you?"

"Nina? There's nobody here by that name. What number are you calling?"

"I'm calling Nina Levin. Is she there?"

"Nina Levin? Huh-uh. Nobody here by that name. You must have the wrong number."

"But all the candidates for public office for the last several years have said that we could call Nina Levin by the first of April, 1991. Are you absolutely sure she's not at this number?"

"*I'm* sure. Are *you* sure this isn't some kind of April Fool's joke somebody is playing on you?"

"Well, I guess it could be; we've been fooled before. But this could be serious. What if we needed the Police or Fire Department for an emergency?"

"Does Nina work in public safety or something? I have all those numbers written on the wall here. Maybe you should call the Police Department at 483-2311 or the Fire Department at 482-3311. Non-emergency calls are supposed to go to 483-9510. Have you tried that number yet?"

"I'm new in the neighborhood and haven't even paid my taxes yet. I don't know whether to call the City, the County, the State Police -- or even Campus Security. Do they carry guns in this town? It's all so confusing. Those politicians said it would make everything easier to just call Nina Levin after April first."

"Well, good luck. Maybe we *will* actually be in touch with the rest of the County after the General Election."

"Well, thanks, anyway, for your help. I'm terriby sorry for the confusion. Good bye."

"Good luck. Now try dialing *911* and see what you get. Good bye."

Our annual We're Almost Going Out of Business Notice:

Sponsors appreciated, thanked, encouraged and reminded once again

Sponsors of this little monthly Rag are notified that we must pay our bills, too, and only paid-up announcements will appear beyond this issue

Rex Richie has sent statements to current and past sponsors and can be reached at:

Rex Richie
1065 Maplewood
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Please show your continued support in a check to: *"Depot Town Association, Inc."*

a PATCHWORK of commercial creativity -- *Depot Town!*

Aubree's
Pool is Cool
39 East Cross Street

Live Blues is back in Depot Town every Tuesday night with **The Rhythms**
No cover charge
SIDETRACK
Good Food, Good Drinks, Good Times
56 E. Cross Street • 483-1053

Cable TV & Video games
FREE Delivery
Red Rooster Pizza
. . . and Dairy Bar
37 East Cross • 483-4555

Teachers Shop & LEARNING CENTER, LTD.
YOUR K12 CONNECTION
all materials for CLASSROOMS & CURRICULA
482-6373
16 E. CROSS STREET
YPSILANTI, MI. 48198

BAR
Yes, there are still places where they decorate the tables with carnations in beer bottles. Welcome back to the Good Old Days.

in my Depot Town studio . . .
PIANO LESSONS
Steve Gustafson
485-3765

City Radiator
100 North River
483-2248

CITY BODY
20 East Cross Street
Front end alignment
& Collision repair

MYOMASSOLOGIST
Joan M. Scully
Massage Therapy
434-5317
Recovery Oriented• Women's Issues
Stress Relief • Therapeutic Massage
Reflexology
Gift Certificates available

T E D'S
Auto Electric
307 North River • 483-1238

Trade a Paperback for one of Barb's for only.70c plus tax! Crazy!
Crazy Barb's
Paperback Book Exchange!
Mon-Sat 11am-6:00pm
50 East Cross **484-4564**

FOR SALE
JIGSAW PUZZLES
"Springbok"
500 TITLES 1965-'90
Charles Thayer
572-0507
(See framed puzzles for sale at "Crazy Barb's")

Depot Town Association, Inc. 21 February 1991

Minutes of January meeting were approved.

Treasurer's report showed a bal$1521.70 waiving fees for last August. This will be added as a line item for Heritage music programs.

Membership: New or renewing members listed on this page. 3pm March 2 will be the DTA Quarterly Meeting at the Freighthouse with the Cookie Contest.

Frog Island contract with The Ark was accepted as presented by Rex Richie. The date for this year has been changed to the second weekend in June. Two sponsors of last year's program have still not responded to billings.

Rag Report: Sponsor collections continue with Rex Richie. Beginning with the April issue, only paid-up sponsors will be included in the printing. Past and present sponsors have been billed and should respond to Rex Richie, ???, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.

Freighthouse Events Committee: Margaret Harner, Paul Fetters, Carolyn McKeever and Steve Gross have met with the City's Gary Urich and Amy McMillan to build a proposal of one-day family-oriented events in that facility. It is nearly ready for presentation to City Manager Gilsdorf. More progress in March.

Events Committee: The April 20 blues event has been cancelled due to lack of financial backing; the $4000 budget rescinded.

- A line item will be created in the budget shown as 'musical events.'
- Bids are out for the Frog Island program printing.
- A second issue of the Frog Island enamel pin will be created and sold through district stores.

Cookie Contest is slated for March 2. Entries are coming in and publicity is out. Seven people will judge and prizes, so far, consist of dinners and T-shirts.

Communications:

- Farmers' Market Board meeting
- IRS re: 501(c)3
- Salvation Army
- Magician/clown
- Probate/Juvenile Court

President A.William French's informal monthly survey reveals need for flag poles, retirement plan for old barbers, disappointment of lack of progress on the depot, excitement over renewed plan for the Signal Tower replication, reports of Heritage Festival from policy committee member Steve Gross, Chamber of Commerce from Carolyn McKeever, meetings with CBC executive board. Bill presented a large photo showing the huge crowd in the streets for the first big Friday event at Heritage Fest: the Jitterbug Contest, and all agreed it should be duplicated this year.

Bet Yet Award to Sally and Rex Richie for successfully selling their Ice Cream parlor, The Occasion Station, a great contribution to the district these past ten years. They remain active property owners in the district.

The Golden Goose Award: much muttering about snow problems, but nothing horrendous enough to merit 'official designation.'

New or renewing DTA members:

Suzanne Shaw — Image Photo Lab
Action Rental — Stan & Ocie Harbison
Finn's JM&J Insurance

The Depot Town Association

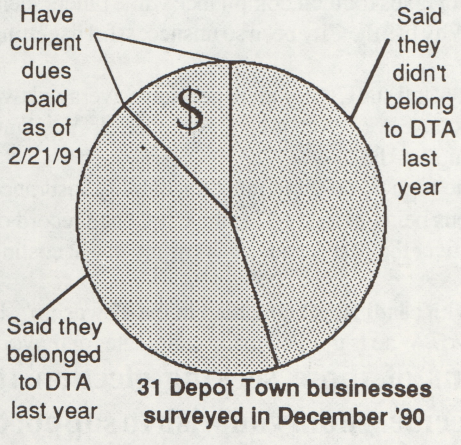
is a nonprofit, tax exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character and history of the Depot Town area and to ensuring the economic growth and stablity of the area.

Cut out and mail your dues to:
DTA, 400 Market Place,
Ypsilanti, MI, 48198.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
__ Associate member $10.
__ Business/Property member $25.
__ Sustaining member $100.
__ Please mail *The Rag* or __I'll pick it up.

Depot Town Association, Inc.
Quarterly Meeting
3 pm Saturday
2 March 1991
in the Freighthouse Coffeeshop

It's time to show your support for district promotions and activities:



31 Depot Town businesses surveyed in December '90

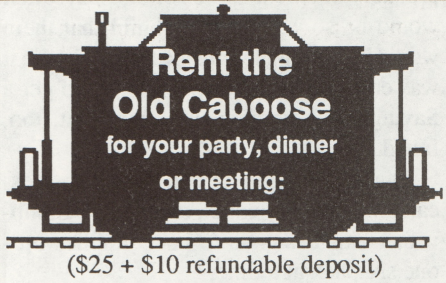
THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

-Tom Dodd, editor

The Depot Town Association, Inc.
A. William French, president
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Active Memberships :
- Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce
- Washtenaw Council for the Arts
- Neighborhood Associations of Michigan



($25 + $10 refundable deposit)
Call 483-4256.

March 1991

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

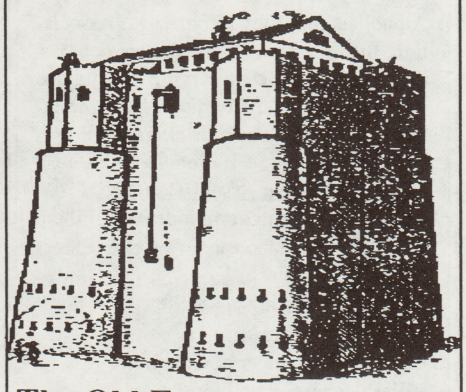
Depot Town Association
21st , 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 21
The Old Caboose

Depot Town Antique Engine Club
28th, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, 28
Freighthouse Coffeeshop

Depot Town Development Authority (DDA) April 11, 1991
Freighthouse Coffeeshop

Jump Into Spring
with
Quality Advertizing
from
Hansen's
Standard Printing
483-0339

Edifice Complex:
Local History that Never Happened



The Old Fort

From the very beginning, Fort Ypsi was probably doomed. Critics of the plan said it would be so expensive to build that there would be nothing left inside to guard once it was erected. Another plan hoped to get a Savings & Loan franchise but, that, too, failed.

Long before the invention of elevators, escalators or credit cards, a primitive dumbwaiter was designed to haul supplies up - one six-pack at a time.

Funds were finally diverted into a local college's football stadium and alumni fund and ground was never broken for what had promised to be the heaviest building in southeastern Michigan at that time. It never got off the ground.

New owners, old name at the Parlor

Miller's Ice Cream
ICE CREAM

Gwen Blackmer had plenty of background in business before she bought the Ice Cream Parlor down in Depot Town. Work in a travel agency and managing the Dairy Queen Brazier provided the necessary experience for her reopening of Miller's Ice Cream Parlor and Emporium this month.

"We went back to the original name that Sally and Rex Richie had given it — and then we added 'and Emporium' to reflect the gift line," said Gwen. The shop's new arrangement sees more tables moved to the front counter area, tables in the rear 'parlor,' and gift items in the middle. The center space includes gifts, cards and crafts and Gwen and husband, David, plan to add a morning coffee and baked goods line soon.

"There'll be light lunches in the soup-and-sandwich format soon," said David. Shannon, their daughter, will also assist in the operation of the popular establishment.

It's another family-owned and operated business in the old railroad district, and Dave's father is on hand, too, relating how he grew up in the neighborhood. The Blackmers have lived in Ypsilanti all their lives and are excited about their Depot Town enterprise. Watch for a Grand Opening soon at 42 East Cross and welcome them to the block.

The Club that beats the streets

Steak & Burger Dinner will start a new tradition

Where do our Depot Town kids hang out? At the Huron Valley Boys & Girls Club, 220 North Park Street. And the quality of what goes on there is mostly up to how much they can afford to offer for the kids' program. In addition to funding through the Washtenaw United Way, the Club's Executive Director, Ike Booker, announces the First Annual Steak & Burger Dinner.

Says Ike, "For this fundraiser, businesspeople in the community will sponsor a member of the club to a steak dinner, Wednesday, March 13, at 7pm at the Radisson Resort."

Tickets are $40 per person or $350 for a corporate table which includes six adults and four kids at each table. Each person and/or organization purchasing one or more tables will recieve special recognition in the program book.

"We will use the proceeds to operate these critical programs and activities, career explorations, arts and crafts, musical program, tutorial program, physical education and ecology."

Depot Towners wishing to sponsor a youth can contact Ike Booker at the Boys & Girls Club - 481-0266.

Getting ready for the Spring elections

WHY? Some questions for Ypsilanti taxpayers and citizens to ask of those who are running for Ypsilanti City Council:

1. Why is there still no 911 Emergency phone system in Ypsilanti? Why have our local politicians been unable to put this into effect in cooperation with a County-wide system?

2. Why doesn't Ypsilanti get equal service from its Cable TV contract? Columbia Cable gives constant coverage to Ann Arbor events, exclusively, on locals channels 8, 9, and 10. What happens to Ypsilanti subscribers' contributions to the Cable contract?

3. Why is the recycling effort in Ypsilanti restricted to only selected neighborhoods? Why are many apartment and commercial districts avoided? Don't they pay the same taxes which subsidize recycling and don't they collect the same recyclable materials?

4. Why does the City seem to enforce the building code in a selective manner? Some properties strive to meet code and are constantly paying higher taxes for their compliance while others seem to continually depreciate in condition and value. Why has the City been so unsuccessful in getting compliance?

6. Why do we get such a constant turnover of City Hall staff? City managers have averaged two years, each, over the last decade. Other positions have seen even greater turnover. Is Ypsilanti still "The City That Works?" What about working *for* the City?

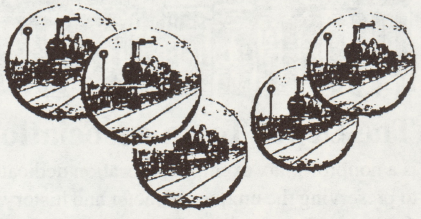
7. Why must community organizations pay the highest possible rates for liability insurance when using City facilities? Are these organizations being penalized for the City's bad record of liability? How much has the City lost in law suits over the past decade and how much is it costing the taxpayers for such negligence?

8. Why are the election information sessions with candidates being held in the Township? Is this an indication of an imminent merger of the two? Who is the Township candidate for mayor?

Ask these - and other - questions of those seeking election to Ypsilanti City Council and then decide whom you wish to support.

Depot Town Association
Quarterly Meeting
and
Cookie Contest

3 pm Satuday
2 March 1991
in the Freighthouse Coffeeshop



Entries in the Cookie Contest must be preregisterd (482-3463). Winners will be announced at 3pm.

Membership has its privileges:

The cookie judging and the quarterly meeting will be held in the coffeeshop between 3 and 4 pm for paid-up DTA members only (dues will be cheerfully accepted at this time). Coffee, milk, tea, and juice will also be served.

YPSI FOOD COOP

Bulk Herbs, Spices, Teas, & Coffees

Fresh produce, Amish Chicken, Organic Beef

312 N. River St.

Open every day

Sunday 12-5; M,T,Th, F 10-7; Wed. 10-9; Sat. 9-7

483-1520

A DEPOT TOWN SAMPLER

FOOD • FUN • ANTIQUES

24-hour *Hot Line:*

Call: 482-YPSI

for information on historic Depot Town!

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B&W/Color Printing, Double Prints

IMAGE PHOTO LAB

Mon. thru Fri. 10 to 6, Sat. 10 to 3

Michael Leach — Toni McCarthy

11 East Cross — **482-3370**

BELL, BOOK & CANDLE

44 E. Cross St. • 487-1970

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Featuring
KATRINA'S COSMETICS

483-3644

Matrix-Paul Mitchell

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FOR QUALIFIED TEMPORARY HELP

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√Personal Computer
√Word Processing
√Data Entry
√Accounting
√Light Industrial
√Marketing
√Technical Support

Ann Arbor - 761-5700 • Ypsilanti - 482-7749

KELLY SERVICES

J&R Trading Post Mall & Antiques

Old New In between | Records | Hats | Old fashioned candy

Jewelry | Mini mall | Gifts | Snacks Cards Glassware

21 East Cross • 483-5870

RIVER ARTWORKS

PROFESSIONAL CUSTOM FRAMERS

482-8785

48 EAST CROSS STREET

in Historic Depot Town

QUALITY• TIMELY SERVICE

Hon's

Flowers & Fancies

46 East Cross

482-2124

A friendly, family kind of place

Olde Towne Coin & Gold

24 East Cross

We buy & sell coins, 14K jewelry

ANA member - Mich. Jewelers Assn.

Appraisals - 483-6155

THOMPSON BUILDING MALL

Antiques and Stained Glass

412 North River • 483-3472

Buying & Selling of Estates and/or Single Items

Esquire Custom Drapery & Blinds

Custom Draperies
Vertical Blinds • 1" Blinds
Shutters • Shades • Wallpaper
Installation • Repairs

Ann Arbor 663-7011

Ypsilanti 482-6338

10 E. Cross St. Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Ike's Depot Barbershop

40 East Cross

Now that we'verecycled everything else in the neighborhood, isn't it time we recycled this copy of *The Rag*?

YPSILANTI RECYCLING PROJECT

Our Little Secret

Resale Clothing & Other Niceties

23 E. Cross Street

483-3637

Membership opportunity:

(Membership has its privileges: See the Cookie Monster Special on page 2!)

River Street Antiques

306 North River Street

487-4580

Our specialty: decorating with antiques